

PRICES OF FOOD START TO DROP

Wholesale Onion, Potato and Poultry Markets Demoralized.

GAMBLERS FACE LOSSES

Ships and Trains Bringing Enormous Cargoes to New York Is Report.

Wholesale markets in potatoes, onions and kosher killed poultry are demoralized. Prices are going down, but housewives still refuse to buy. Wholesale supplies are accumulating. Retailers refuse to load up with foodstuffs they cannot sell. Further declines in prices are inevitable under the circumstances. Speculators, wholesalers and shippers who loaded up on a rising market admit they are facing serious embarrassments.

Seventy-three carloads of live poultry stood on the tracks yesterday. A few cars were sold to out of town trade and small lots went to Italians. Otherwise there was no business and shippers were frantic. Advice has been received that 120 more carloads are due to arrive in this city during the week.

Potatoes and onions are piling up. The steamship "Andromeda" which some time ago brought 3,000,000 pounds of Spanish onions, other cargoes are headed this way. Considerable accumulations of Maine and other old potatoes were reported at receiving yards and docks. Rioting was resumed in Harlem and on the East Side. Onions and potatoes acted as red flags to the mobs.

Opposition to Rice Campaign.

East Side women started organized opposition to George W. Perkins' campaign to popularize rice as a substitute for high priced potatoes. They made speeches at Rutgers square, where they said they "saw" Chinese, and couldn't and wouldn't eat rice. What they wanted, they said, were the things they were accustomed to eat and they wanted them cheap.

Mrs. Ida Harris, one of the leaders of the big crowd that stormed the City Hall last week, said she would lead an advance party of women to the City Hall tomorrow to protest against the Mayor's Food Supply Committee's rice pamphlets.

As these pamphlets were being distributed yesterday among 300,000 children of the public schools word was received that at the mills in the South the price of rice had advanced twenty-five points and at the coast fifty points over Saturday's prices of two and a half cents to five cents per pound. An advance of twenty-five points means a quarter of a cent more per pound.

Mr. Perkins announced that the Mayor's committee has added to its holdings of 4,000,000 pounds of rice and 20,000,000 pounds of Pacific coast rice, which will be disposed of to folks who want to use them instead of white beans, that have doubled in price since 1914.

The Brazilian beans were assigned to a point after Mr. Perkins, but Mr. Perkins and the committee intercepted them. These beans are smaller, but just as good as the white bean, Mr. Perkins said, and far cheaper.

Women Attack Merchant.

The most exciting street demonstration of the day occurred in Harlem. It began when a lot of marching vegetable boyotters who were passing along Third avenue saw Isaac Rosenzweig drive up to his store at 122d street and Third avenue with a big load of potatoes and onions.

The women didn't have any use for high priced vegetables and were determined that nobody else should have them. Rosenzweig jumped off his wagon as the crowd started for it. He realized that he was in danger of losing his stock and leaped back on his seat.

"Four kerosene oil on it!" yelled one woman. "Chuck it away!" shrieked others. Scores of fingers grabbed for the potatoes and onions, which whistled through the air.

"Get back, get back!" yelled Rosenzweig, as he drew out a revolver and pointed it at the women.

Detectives Quaine and Caputo of the Third Branch, who had been looking around for just such outbreaks, yanked Rosenzweig off his wagon. About the same time several reserves came on the jump from the East 125th street police station.

The women did their best to make difficult the work of the two detectives. They trailed the officers and the badly scared produce man to the Third Branch Detective Bureau. Mrs. Gustave Lubet, 20 years old, of 70 East 110th street was arrested at this point for disorderly conduct.

Magistrate Simms said the produce dealer was acting within his rights in view of the fact that he had a permit to carry a revolver to protect his life or his property.

Released in \$500 Bail.

Inasmuch, though, as Mrs. Lubet had preferred charges against him the court adjourned the hearing until tomorrow. The detectives were directed to return Rosenzweig's revolver. The dealer was released in \$500 bail, and the police streaked him out the back door to keep him out of the clutches of the crowd in the street. Mrs. Lubet was remanded until a bondsman released her.

A fracas on the East Side was lively, too, while it lasted. A thousand or more men and women got around Max Fritzer's grocery store at 241 Rivington street and engineered things so that customers couldn't enter the store. A clerk appeared with a box of groceries for delivery and two women pounced on him. They grabbed his overcoat, but he wriggled out of it and took to his heels. Policemen Freed and Fuchs of the Union Market station ran up and stepped on the groceries that had been spilled out of the overturned box.

The policemen say they later found some women trying to pawn the clerk's overcoat. They arrested Mrs. Bella Abramowitz and Mrs. Rosa Rosalsky in a barber shop in the meantime the reserves came up.

Capt. Mason directed his men to be as gentle as possible in handling the riotous women. He said that the good women but had for some of the police, several of whom were scratched up and had their uniforms torn. Three more women as a result were arrested. One of these, Mrs. Sarah Felder of 246 Rivington street, later told Magistrate Nathan in the Essex Market Court that she got mixed up in the riot because she was returning from a pawnshop.

She showed two candlesticks as proof of her statement and explained that she hadn't wanted them because the pawnbroker wouldn't give her more than 50 cents. She didn't have any bread at home, she said, and needed the money. Mrs. Felder was unable to pay a fine of \$2. Mrs. Clara Ringelman and Mrs. Fannie Schleimer were also fined \$2 each, but Mrs. Abramowitz and Mrs. Rosenzweig were fined \$10 each.

In announcing the purchase of the Brazilian beans by the Mayor's food supply committee Mr. Perkins, the chairman, said: "We cannot tell just yet what the price of these beans will be, but they will be considerably cheaper than white beans, the price of which is 12½ cents a pound. These beans were brought through the city from a point and we acquired them at 11½ cents a pound. If it is as a private citizen could do this it goes to show what could be done if there was centralized market department with facilities for finding out the sources of food supplies needed for the city."

Frank Mackel at \$1 a Barrel.

Mr. Perkins said that a lot of fresh mackerel arrived in this city from Florida on Saturday too late to get into the market here. The owner was willing to sell them at the rate of \$1 a barrel, although the regular price was from \$6 to \$7 a barrel. The committee didn't hear of this particular lot of fish until after they had been sent out of the city.

Ten carloads of English are now on the way from Florida, Mr. Perkins said. If an individual can hear these things, he added, a market department, if one existed, could hear them and make arrangements accordingly to secure a market for much needed foodstuffs.

The Brazilian beans that the Mayor's committee will dispose of consist of 11½ cents a pound. It is expected that the rice, Pacific coast smelt and Brazilian beans will be disposed of to the public through members of the retailers' organizations, who are willing to perform this service in the cause of lower prices. They will be allowed commissions on sales. Signs will be placed in stores announcing that the food supply committee's plan will be in effect. This plan, it is said, is a temporary city market for the distribution of these particular consignments.

Good Argument for Wicks Bill.

The whole transaction from the purchase of the commodities until they get into the hands of consumers at prices far below what are now being paid will be in the light of an argument that any one can understand in favor of the creation of a market department contemplated by the pending Wicks bill.

Attempts were made yesterday to inaugurate strikes of school children as a protest against the rising prices of chicken, vegetables, etc. Several women went to Public School No. 32, at Broome and Sheridans streets, No. 110, at Cannon and Broome streets, and tried to persuade children to play "hooky."

They succeeded in a number of instances, but the desertions were in no way general.

Joseph Hartigan, Commissioner of Weights and Measures, gave out figures yesterday showing the comparative amounts of foodstuffs that were received in this city on Saturday and a year ago. They showed they proved conclusively that there has been no falling off of foodstuff supplies.

The question of making a special charge for chili sauce, catnip and other sauces was seriously discussed last night at a meeting of the West Side Hotel Club in the Hotel Majestic. The management of nineteen hotels were represented. It was hinted that pepper and salt should go down on the list also. The question before the house was not definitely settled.

Break in Food "Corners."

Mr. Hartigan announced that there has been a break in the "foodstuff corners" and that the price of potatoes and onions was going down. The retail price of potatoes, which was \$1.08 a peck on Wednesday last, had dropped to \$1.04 on Thursday. Potatoes were being sold, he said, at \$5 and \$10 a barrel. Onions, wholesale, he said, were offered at \$9 to \$10 per 100 pound bag.

As against \$13 last week.

Rabbi Herbert Goldstein of 1156 Madison avenue has agreed at the request of Commissioner Hartigan to address a circular to all Hebrew congregations in the greater city advising people not to be led by false leaders in the present crisis. The rabbi said the city could depend on the absolute cooperation of all rabbis and through them the cooperation of all conservative people in the congregations.

Deputy Assistant District Attorney Markewich, who with his assistant, Morris Elder, is conducting District Attorney Swann's investigation, said yesterday Government reports show that in December farmers were getting \$1.47 per bushel for potatoes, or twice as much as a year ago. Mr. Markewich said dealers admitted these are the same potatoes for which they have been charging retailers \$10 a barrel.

Produce Dealers Explain.

Oscar Frommel, head of Oscar Frommel & Bros. produce dealers at 635 West Thirty-fourth street, told Mr. Markewich his normal receipts are 100 carloads potatoes a day. He said he had from 15,000 to 20,000 barrels stored in Maine, for which he had paid from \$2 to \$9 a barrel. He added that he couldn't sell and make money and was "not trying to sell at \$5 potatoes, which he had paid \$2."

Before starting for Albany yesterday Gov. Whitman said he believes the situation is improving.

"One of the reasons for the scarcity of food in New York city," he said, "is that there are too many roof gardens in the city. Too few vegetable gardens in the city."

The Governor expressed the belief that the Wicks bill, providing for a State department of markets, etc., will pass after a few minor changes. He intimated that there was strong opposition to the bill, and that it would be only after a hard fight that the measure will pass. He believes that if the measure becomes a law it will tend materially to straighten out matters and prevent a repetition of what has occurred.

There will be a hearing on the bill tomorrow afternoon at Albany.

FOOD CONTROL BOARDS URGED.

East Siders Favor State and National Action to Aid Poor.

Resolutions calling for the establishment of State and national food control commissions with power to fix the prices of the necessities of life were adopted last night at a turbulent meeting of East Side dwellers at Clinton Hall, on Clinton street near Grand. The meeting was called by the Day, a Jewish newspaper.

Although all at the meeting were convinced something must be done at once to lower prices, apparently two held the same views on methods, and chaotic disorder prevailed during the latter part of the evening. The climax was reached when one excited man jumped on to the platform and proposed that each member of a committee of twenty-five which had been appointed be given a hammer to break open the freight cars full of food on various tracks in the city. He was wildly applauded.

George W. Perkins, the principal speaker, and the only one who spoke in "United States" as he called it, told the people who were jammed into every nook and corner of the hall, that until some bureau or department of food supply had been established in the city they must expect no permanent relief.

"All this talk of establishing a market here or a market there is about as effective as throwing a quinine pill into the Atlantic Ocean to make it bitter," he declared.

He'll Swap Six Onions for a Car.

"Will Exchange for a Good Ford Car" is a sign that appears in the window of M. L. Smith, a produce dealer at Eighteenth street and Eighth avenue. Whitestones, L. F. Standing beside this sign is a basket holding six onions and six potatoes. Smith says he puts his precious basket in the safe at night, and has asked the patrolman on beat to keep a special watch over it during the day.

WHITMAN DEMANDS UNIT CITY OPTION

Wants Hill-Wheeler Bill Amended to Void Determination by Wards.

MEASURE GAINS FRIENDS

Governor Gives Views at Conference of Legislators and Dry Leaders.

ALBANY, Feb. 26.—Gov. Whitman announced to-night at the end of a conference with members of the Legislature and citizens interested in local option measures that he would insist upon the passage of the Hill-Wheeler bill, which would permit New York and other cities of the State to vote on the question of whether they should be wet or dry. The Governor said that he would insist that the bill be amended so that each city should be the unit for the determination of the question instead of the wards, as provided in the original bill.

The bill thus amended would give 25 per cent. of the enrolled voters of New York city the power to petition and compel the Bureau of Elections to call for a vote on prohibition.

Members of the Legislature, especially those from New York city, were amazed when they learned what the Governor proposed doing, and declared that his action was the most drastic yet taken in the direction of Statewide prohibition.

Path Is Cleared.

Assemblyman Heber E. Wheeler of Ontario, one of the authors of the bill and who was present at the conference, told Gov. Whitman that recently there had been a decided change in the sentiment of the Legislature and that many obstacles which heretofore had been placed in the path of prohibition legislation had been removed.

"Two-thirds of the Excise Committee of the Assembly are prepared to stand behind the Governor and report the bill favorably," he said. "Not only the members from all counties, including where the larger cities are located, are inclined to favor the measure. I addressed a men's meeting in Gloversville last week, and when I told them the Governor was preparing to push the local option measure, it brought every man to his feet cheering."

The Excise Committee will hold a public hearing Wednesday, at which time many of the amendments urged by the Governor and each of which makes the measure more effective from a prohibition standpoint, will be considered. Gov. Whitman has urged that the measure be amended so as to permit county option by providing that the enrolled voters of all counties, including where the larger cities are located, are inclined to favor the measure.

The resolution indorses and commends the action of the President, and assures him of the hearty and fullest support in whatever steps he may deem necessary for the protection of the lives and property of American citizens everywhere when following their lawful pursuits.

Whitman Enters Protest.

Gov. Whitman at the conference to-night entered a protest against the opinion in the Hill-Wheeler measure which permits boards of supervisors to decide whether the local option question shall be submitted to the electors. He declared that he wanted the bill to give the voters of the same rights to determine the question as the voters of the towns now have and that he was averse to any halfway proposition.

The only distinction between towns and cities in the provisions of the original bill is that in the town the petition of only 10 per cent. of the enrolled vote is necessary to compel the calling of an election.

Opponents of prohibition legislation in general and the Hill-Wheeler bill in particular are expected to try to defeat the bill when it comes up for passage. The action of the Governor in calling the referendum and his subsequent announcement disposing of the rumors which had been current during the last few days that the Senate Taxation Committee's excise law amendments would be the only dry legislation this year, are viewed as a step to the prohibition movement.

URGES TARIFF COMMISSION.

Citizens Union Asks Board of Estimate to End Contention.

The Citizens Union yesterday joined with other civic organizations in asking the Board of Estimate to form a tariff commission to devise ways and means of relieving the congestion of the city. William Jay Schiefelin, chairman of the Union, sent a letter to the board in which he said:

"We are convinced the creation of such a body is essential if the dangerous conditions existing in our streets are to be dealt with in the most efficient manner for its solution. In many sections it will be found necessary to make changes in street layouts and place restrictions on the use of certain thoroughfares."

"The plan must necessarily form a part of the general scheme of city development contemplated by the zoning resolution, and should therefore be formulated in a similar manner."

SUGAR SENT TO MRS. CLEWS.

Barrel Is Shipped to Paris at Total Cost of \$52.

A barrel of sugar was shipped in haste yesterday to Mrs. Henry Clews, Jr., in Paris. The barrel cost \$24 at the refinery and \$25 more in shipping charges and insurance was paid.

Owing to the scarcity of sugar in France and the poor grade sold Mrs. Clews had a barrel forwarded from New York by express. It weighs 40 pounds and was purchased at six cents a pound. For forwarding Mrs. Clews paid \$21 and \$2 more insurance. The total cost will be 13 cents a pound.

Mrs. Clews has been living in Paris more than a year.

20,000 Children's Hearts Damaged.

At least 20,000 children in the public schools have permanently damaged hearts, according to a report of the Babies Welfare League, made public yesterday. Young people often acquire heart diseases from neglected teeth, tonsils or adenoids, according to the report, which says that education and supervision are the greatest aids in the war against the spread of these forms of illness.

Premier Murray Defeated.

St. John, N. B., Feb. 26.—Defeat of the Government in New Brunswick headed by Premier J. A. Murray was completed with the return to-day from the deferred election in Gloucester county, which gave the Opposition all four of its seats. Unofficial figures show the Opposition to have twenty-seven seats and the Government twenty-one.

TRAINED ARMY PLEA BY ROOT CHEERED

New York Chamber of Commerce Adopts Resolution Urging Compulsory Service.

WILSON STAND INDORSED

Only One Dissenting Voice to Plan Outlined for National Defence.

Indignation at the German submarine note, a determination to stand back of President Wilson in the crisis the note has brought about and a warning to the nation to prepare for national defence were voiced in resolutions adopted yesterday by the Chamber of Commerce of New York.

There probably never has been a more enthusiastic meeting of the organization and the old hall in Liberty street, decorated with pictures of the stern faced men who founded the city and country, and draped with the stars and stripes of the American flag, resounded with handclapping as Elihu Root, formerly Secretary of War, outlined the steps the country should take to prepare for war and welding Ring recounted the steps in the relations between the United States and Germany which brought the countries to a parting of the diplomatic ways.

There was but one dissenting voice to Mr. Root's resolution, which he outlined a plan for national defence by universal training of young men. He included the phrase in the resolution: "It is no longer necessary to argue that there is need for preparation. We are on the verge of war with a great military power, yet we are practically defenceless."

Ludwig Nissou Objects.

Ludwig Nissou objected to the statement "we are on the verge of war" and moved that it be stricken out. "When our Secretary of State made that statement some time ago it disturbed our entire economic fabric and ruined many Americans," he said. "It is for our Government to say when we are on the verge of war: it is its privilege and duty, not ours, to say so."

Mr. Root seconded Mr. Nissou's motion and asserted that such a statement would do more harm than good. The objectors were voted down by a majority of the members present and the resolution stood as offered by Mr. Root.

Wedding Ring characterized the German note as "a menace to the national right of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, to establish which our forefathers fought and to maintain which the people of this country are willing now to fight."

His associates on the committee were E. H. Underbridge, Frank A. Vanderlip, Willard Straight, Samuel W. Fairchild, Irving T. Bush, Howard P. Smith, A. Barton Hepburn and Darwin P. Kingsley.

The resolution indorses and commends the action of the President, and assures him of the hearty and fullest support in whatever steps he may deem necessary for the protection of the lives and property of American citizens everywhere when following their lawful pursuits.

"The Government of the United States should immediately equip all American steamers carrying mail to and from Europe under contract with naval guns subject during the past three years and the bill should be supported and passed."

"That the existing force of regulars and militia is altogether inadequate for the defence of the country."

Calvin Tomkins offered a resolution that the executive committee be empowered to make a study of the mobilization of industrial resources and it was adopted. The Chamber of Commerce also pledged its support to the principle "that the business men of the country shall supply all services, commodities and inventions required by the national Government at prices which will yield a profit no greater than would be received in similar transactions with private customers."

"In a democracy it is imperative that the people should know at all times and beyond peradventure that certain great underlying principles will be maintained at any cost," continued the committee, "and therefore we suggest that the Government should let the public know how it intends to maintain and enforce our rights at sea and what arrangements it proposes to make for the safety of our ships and the lives of our seamen and citizens travelling by them."

Root on Military Training.

Elihu Root, speaking for a committee composed of Robert Bacon, Herbert L. Satterlee, Jacob W. Miller and Anson W. Burchard, said that there is a ripe for action on the principle that every American citizen owes a duty to his country to take part in its defence so far as he is physically able, and to keep himself always prepared to perform that duty effectively.

"The best method of making it effective," said Mr. Root, "is to take the young men of the country when they reach the age of 18 and during their nineteenth year, when it will interfere least with their education, giving them intensive training in military service, so that if the country needs them thereafter they may be really useful for national defence. This is the true democratic method. It is the only practical method, as substantially all the other civilized countries of the world have ascertained by experience."

"It requires the stimulus and excitement of immediate war to stir men to the point of volunteering, and when war is immediate the men who volunteer are not an army. They are a helpless crowd as against troops trained in the scientific warfare of the present day. We cannot expect an enemy to wait for us to train our troops to fight. We must train men beforehand if we are to be ready to fight when the fighting is to be done."

Urges More Armament.

"We ought to be driving with all our force in the manufacture of submarines and airplanes and cruisers and larger calibre high power guns and shells and field artillery and rapid fire machine guns and rifles, and munition of all kinds and a hundred other things necessary or useful in modern warfare. Manifestly we are not doing it. If we were doing it the evidence would be patent to every one in the country. Plainly we are not. It seems that very little is being done."

"Four specific propositions were presented by the committee and they are: "That an adequate army for the national defence has not been and cannot be procured by taking the National Guard into the Federal service."

"That under modern conditions of warfare an adequate volunteer army cannot be procured in time of peace so as to be trained for service in time of war."

"That universal training for military service and obligation to render it when called upon furnish the only method of providing adequate defence."

Approval of Pending Bill.

"That the bill providing a plan for the general training of young men in their nineteenth year prepared by the General Staff of the Army at the request of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs be transmitted to the President for signature by the Secretary of War."

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